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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00

SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01 SS-15 L-03

H-02 PRS-01 PA-01 DHA-02 DODE-00 /074 W
---------- 062856
R 011016Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6674
INFO DEA WASHDC
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 32679

E.O. GDS
TAGS: SNAR, TH
SUBJECT: STIFF SENTENCES FOR TRAFFICKERS

REF: (A) BANGKOK 14913 (B) BANGKOK 22768

1. ACCORDING TO THAI PRESS OF DECEMBER 1, THE CRIMINAL COURT ON NOVEMBER 30 SENTENCED HEROIN TRAFFICKER HONG NILAWATCHARARANG TO 120 YEARS IN PRISON FOR POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS. HONG, 23 YEARS OLD AND HIS 15 YEARS OLD SISTER, SUNANTHA, WERE ARRESTED IN MARCH 1976 IN POSSESSION OF 4 KILOGRAMS OF NUMBER 3 HEROIN. SUNANTHA IS AWAITING TRIAL IN JUVENILE COURT. HONG'S FATHER AND ONE BROTHER ARE CURRENTLY SERVING PRISON TERMS IN THAILND FOR TRAFFICKING.

2. THE CRIMINAL COURT HANDED DOWN TWO OTHER SENTENCES FOR NARCOTICS OFFENSES ON NOVEMBER 30. HONG KONG CHINESE LUANG HUANG KHAM AND THAI TAXI DRIVER SOMSAK RITTHICHAI WERE EACH SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS IN PRISON FOR ATTEMPTING TO SMUGGLE 4.45 KILOGRAMS OF NUMBER 3 HEROIN TO HONG KONG ON MAY24. THE SENTENCES WERE RE-DECED TO 20 YEARS EACH AFTER THE MEN CONFESSED TO THEIR
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CRIME. LUANG WAS ARRESTED ALONG WITH HONG KONG TRAFFICKERS PAK YOK LIN AND MAK SUAN HUANG (REF A). THE LATTER TWO MEN WERE LATER RELEASED ON BOND AND THEN DISAPPEARED, ALLEGEDLY AFTER BRIBING AN OFFICIAL OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS DEPARTMENT (WHO HAS SINCE RETIRED). (REF B).

3. THESE SENTENCES ONCE AGAIN DEMONSTRATE THE WILLINGNESS OF THAI COURTS TO HAND DOWN HARSH SENTENCES TO TRAFFICKERS WHEN PRESENTED WITH GOOD CASES BY HONEST PROSECUTORS. PRATHUANG KIRATIBUT, NEWLY APPOINTED HEAD OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS DEPARTMENT (BY THE SENI GOVERNMENT). HAS ALREADY BEGUN THE DIFFICULT TASK OF CLEANING OUT THOSE ELEMENTS IN HIS DEPARTMENT WHO FOILED THE LEGAL SYSTEM IN THE PAST. THE MISSION HOPES THAT IMPROVEMENTS WILL LESSEN THE ABILITY OF WEALTHY TRAFFICKERS TO BEAT THE SYSTEM.
WHITEHOUSE

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